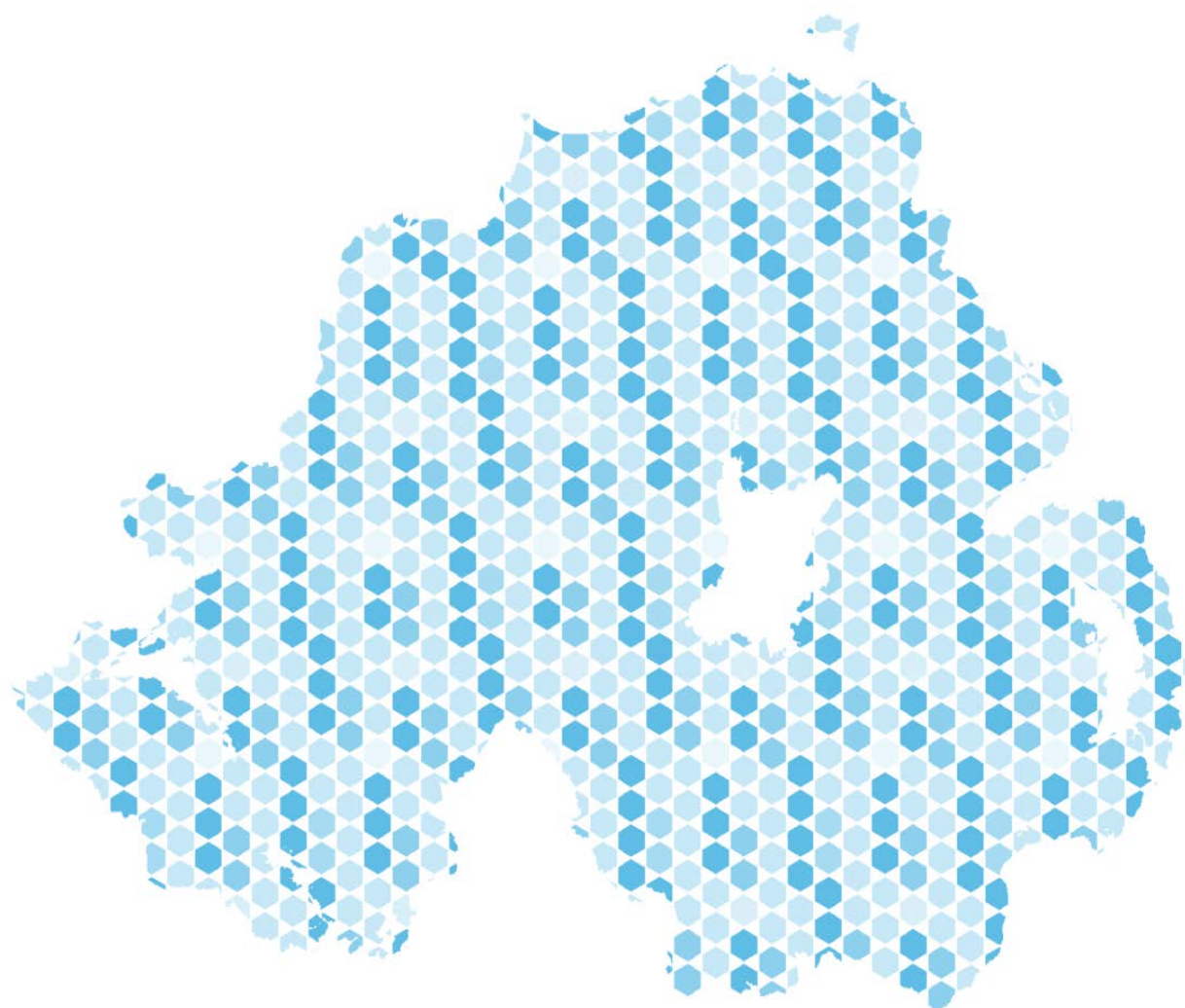


PRIMARY INSPECTION 2014-15



Education and Training
Inspectorate

St Patrick's Primary School
and Nursery Unit, Dungannon,
Co Tyrone

Report of an Inspection in
November 2014

eti

*The Education and Training Inspectorate -
Promoting Improvement*

Providing Inspection Services for

Department of Education
Department for Employment and Learning
Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure

CUSTOMER
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Quantitative terms

In this report, proportions may be described as percentages, common fractions and in more general quantitative terms. Where more general terms are used, they should be interpreted as follows:

Almost/nearly all	-	more than 90%
Most	-	75%-90%
A majority	-	50%-74%
A significant minority	-	30%-49%
A minority	-	10%-29%
Very few/a small number	-	less than 10%

Performance levels

The Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) use the following performance levels in reports:

DESCRIPTOR
Outstanding
Very Good
Good
Satisfactory
Inadequate
Unsatisfactory

Contents

Section	Page
1. Inspection method and evidence base	1
2. Focus of inspection	1
3. Context	2
4. Overall findings of the inspection	2
5. Achievements and standards	2
6. Provision	3
7. Leadership and management	5
8. Conclusion	6
Appendix	

1. Inspection method and evidence base

The key questions and quality indicators which guide inspection and self-evaluation of primary schools, which were applied to this inspection, are available in the Education and Training Inspectorate's (ETI) publication *Together Towards Improvement: a process for self-evaluation* at: <http://www.eti.gov.uk/index/together-towards-improvement/together-towards-improvement-primary.htm>.

Inspectors observed teaching and learning, scrutinised documentation and the children's written work and held formal and informal discussions with children, teachers and staff with specific responsibilities.

The arrangements for this inspection included:

- a meeting with a representatives from the governors;
- meetings with groups of children; and
- the opportunity for the parents, teaching and support staff to complete a confidential questionnaire.

A small number of the parents and almost all of the staff (teaching and non-teaching) responded to the questionnaires. The responses to the parental questionnaires indicated high levels of satisfaction with the life and work of the school. In particular, the parents highlighted the caring and professional staff, their children's excellent progress and the wide range of extra-curricular activities on offer and the diversity of opportunities for the children to extend their learning. The staff who completed questionnaires were very positive about their work; they emphasised how the staff, parents and the local community work together to ensure the holistic development of the children. The governors expressed their appreciation for the hard work and dedication of the principal and staff and highlighted their work in developing links with other schools and within the local community. ETI has reported to the principal and a representative of the board of governors the main findings emerging from the questionnaires and the discussions.

2. Focus of inspection

The inspection focused on:

1. the children's achievements and standards in literacy and numeracy, in particular, how the school is addressing low attainment and underachievement where applicable;
2. the quality of provision for literacy and numeracy in the school; and
3. the quality of leadership and management.

3. Context

St Patrick's Primary School and Nursery Units Dungannon operates on a split site, with two 26 place full-time nursery units at its main Killyman Road location and a further 26 place full-time and 26 place part-time nursery unit at the Ballysaggart Business Park. The latter part-time unit was created as a temporary measure to accommodate an unforeseen increase in demand for pre-school provision in the area. The school has an Education Centre for Speech and Language (ECSL) unit, which is only one of two in the Southern Education and Library Board area; and two Learning Support Classes, one for children in key stage 1 (KS1) and another for children in key stage 2 (KS2).

The children come from both the surrounding and wider Dungannon area; over the last five years, the school has managed successfully the significant and ongoing changes in the diversity, composition and educational needs of its children. During this period, the enrolment of the school has increased by 10% and currently stands at 751 children with a further 105 children in the nursery units; the proportion of newcomer children has increased from 48% to 70%; and the proportion of children entitled to free schools meals has also increased from 20% to 33%. Currently, the school has identified 12% of the children as requiring additional support with aspects of their learning.

St. Patrick's Primary School	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
Enrolment	787	792	829	856
% Attendance (NI Average)	91.7	91.6	92.8	94.2
FSME Percentage ¹	23.25	28.5	30.0	33
% (No) of children on SEN register	14.99	14.89	13.38	12
No. of children with statements of educational needs	18	18	20	23
No. of newcomers	428	451	496	596

Source: data as held by the school.

4. Overall findings of the inspection

Overall Performance Level	Very Good
Achievements and Standards	Very Good
Provision	Very Good
Leadership and Management	Very Good
Nursery Units	Good

5. Achievements and standards

- The children are courteous, happy and well-motivated learners; most settle quickly to their learning and respond positively to the activities provided by their teachers. The children's behaviour is exemplary both in class and as they move around the school; they are respectful towards staff and visitors to the school.

¹ The term 'FSME Percentage' refers to the percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals.

- The schools internal data indicates that most of the children, including those who require additional support with aspects of their learning, make very good progress in English in line with their ability. The majority of children, including those who require additional support with aspects of their learning, make good progress in mathematics in line with their ability.
- The children communicate their ideas and opinions with increasing independence and extended vocabulary as they progress through the key stages. They are confident to perform for audiences within and beyond the school and have achieved significant success in local choral and musical competitions. In addition, all of the children perform for the local community in the annual school show. By year 7, the children's acquisition of spoken and written English is of a very good standard.
- Overall, the standards achieved by the children in mathematics are good; they gain appropriate knowledge and understanding of key mathematical concepts and are successful in applying associated skills. By year 7, the highest achieving children can apply competently a range of strategies, explain their thinking with confidence using the correct mathematical language and can self-correct when appropriate. They demonstrate flexible thinking in problem-solving and problem-posing tasks.
- The children who require additional support with aspects of their learning display positive attitudes to each other and the tasks set. They are fully integrated into all aspects of the life and work of the school and are guided very well through the recently modified model of in-class support and withdrawal sessions. The children are making very good progress in line with their ability.
- The children in the ECSL and the Learning Support Centres display positive attitudes towards their learning, demonstrating increasing confidence and effective personal and social skills. They make good progress commensurate with their individual needs and abilities.
- In most of the nursery classes, the children are developing well their ability to concentrate, persevere and complete tasks. Almost all of the children are respectful to the staff and to one another; most respond well to the encouragement of staff to take turns and to share resources.
- The children use information and communication technology (ICT) with increasing independence and confidence to consolidate their learning, for example, by exploring basic programming, researching and presenting their learning, and by exploring their creativity through music composition.

6. Provision

- The quality of planning, assessment, learning and teaching observed in almost all of the lessons was effective. In the most effective practice, in most of the lessons observed, the learning activities were well-paced, provided very good opportunities for the children to work together and had a good balance of practical, oral and written activities. The children were provided with challenging tasks and engaging activities to develop their critical and creative thinking skills. There were effective plenary sessions to assess and consolidate the children's learning, and well-planned opportunities for the children to review their own learning and understand how to improve the quality of their work.

- The teachers plan regularly within the year groups; they now need to evaluate the effectiveness of their planning and ensure continuity and progression within and across the year groups. It will be important to disseminate further the best practice within teaching and learning to ensure that all classes have a consistently high quality learning experience.
- The teachers have recently broadened the range of activities used to improve the children's learning experiences in mathematics; they are developing their long-term, medium-term and daily planning in light of this change. On a few occasions, the imbalance between the acquisition and consolidation of understanding and skills was evident during the inspection. The teachers need to maintain a focus on the learning arising from the activities to ensure that the children's understanding and skills are consolidated and built upon effectively to ensure appropriate progression. In the best practice, the teachers use effective questioning to challenge and extend the children's thinking, and match the activities well to their abilities. The children engage enthusiastically with these activities and develop and consolidate their numeracy skills, matching the high expectations of their teachers. A particular strength of the mathematics provision is the teachers' emphasis on the importance of literacy in the children's acquisition of key mathematical concepts.
- The skilful teaching and integration of talking and listening, reading and writing is differentiated carefully within the best practice to meet the wide range of language needs. The teachers are building coherently on the younger children's understanding and extending their vocabulary. The teaching of reading consolidates very good talking and listening strategies which include comprehension, recall, repetition and sequencing of favourite stories and ideas. As the children progress through the school, they explore effectively a range of fiction and non-fiction books. They have recently begun to enjoy an extended range of novels and to peer-assess and redraft independently their writing.
- The children who require additional help with aspects of their learning are well-supported and motivated to develop language and to access learning; their literacy skills are developed incrementally and consolidated through multi-sensory approaches, writing aids and memory games. The teachers and classroom assistants use skilfully well-chosen questions to develop the children's confidence, independence, and social and thinking skills within a secure and nurturing learning environment.
- Recently, the principal has undertaken extensive diagnostic work with the children from year 3 to year 7 to identify their specific needs and to allow for a better co-ordinated approach for the provision of in-class and withdrawal support that best meets their needs. As a result, a new format for individual education plans has been developed with a more inclusive method of target setting which includes an input from the children and their parents. It will be important that the targets set are measurable in order to monitor and track progress and to inform future planning for children's needs. It is appropriate that the school has identified the need to continue to build the capacity and expertise of all staff in relation to providing specific support for those children with special educational needs as the inspection identifies this as a key area for development.

- The staff in the nursery units provide a caring and supportive learning environment; they plan a range of activities that provide satisfactory to very good opportunities for learning in all areas of the pre-school curriculum. In the best practice, the staff support very well the children's language development using gesture and visual cues to aid understanding, listen to their ideas and extend their range of learning naturally and appropriately through the play and daily routines. The outdoor areas are attractively laid out, with a stimulating range of activities which are used well to promote the children's learning. In order to make further improvements, the staff now need to review the layout of the playrooms and improve the planning for the activities provided indoors, to ensure a consistently high quality of learning is being provided during both indoor and outdoor play. The staff make some relevant observations of the children's achievements and responses; however, they need to ensure that the activities are appropriately matched to the children's stages of development and the time of year.
- The quality of the provision for pastoral care is a strength in the school. There is a highly inclusive ethos which values and celebrates the children's achievements. The children develop confidence and self-esteem through opportunities to take on roles and responsibilities. The children's views are sought and acted upon, particularly through the effective school council. There is a caring, friendly, welcoming ethos in the school and very good working relationships at all levels. The children in year 6 spoke enthusiastically about their experiences in school including their enjoyment of their learning and they appreciate the support they receive from their teachers.
- The school gives very good attention to promoting healthy-eating and physical activity through both the curriculum and the varied range of extra-curricular physical activities available to the children, thereby encouraging them to adopt healthy lifestyles.

7. Leadership and management

- The principal has been in post for one year and he has evaluated well the quality of the provision across all areas of the curriculum. The principal and vice-principal provide outstanding strategic leadership which focuses on the continuous improvement of the school's provision. The co-ordinators collate and analyse performance data in order to track the progression. They are knowledgeable and fully committed to the continuous improvement of the quality of provision for their areas of responsibility
- The school development plan draws on effective consultation with parents, staff and governors. The inspection findings reflect and confirm all of the priorities identified including the need to progress with the planned reorganisation of aspects of leadership and management and the targeted use of internal and external data to inform development planning and effect improvement.
- The nursery staff have useful opportunities to meet together. The inspection endorses the principal's plans to strengthen the leadership and management of the nursery units through the development of an early years' team, to include teachers from across the foundation stage in order to track the progression in the children's learning throughout the early years. The nursery team need to review the planning for the curriculum and implement more robust processes for systematic monitoring and self-evaluation to ensure consistency of practice and improve standards further.

- The school has outstanding links and partnerships with the parents and the wider community. The recent development of the parents' learning centre is providing excellent opportunities for the parents to attend courses that will help them to support the development of their children's language and learning. There are very good methods of communication with the parents to keep them informed about their children's progress and the work of the school.
- The governors collaborate effectively with the principal and staff; they support and challenge the progress of the actions which are carried out in the implementation of the school development plan. Based on the evidence presented at the time of the inspection, ETI's evaluation is that there can be a high degree of confidence in the aspects of governance inspected.
- On the basis of the evidence available at the time of the inspection, the school and nursery units have comprehensive arrangements in place for safeguarding children. These arrangements reflect the guidance issued by the Department of Education. In discussions with the inspectors, the children reported that they feel very secure in school and know what to do if they have any concerns about their well-being.

8. Conclusion

In the areas inspected, the quality of education provided by this school is very good. The school is meeting very effectively the educational and pastoral needs of the children, and has demonstrated its capacity for sustained self-improvement.

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